

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2015

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You can tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings at 08:15 Central African Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Central African Time in English on HF and on many VHF and UHF repeaters around our country. Echolink listeners can connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League web site.

This audio bulletin can be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za. You will find this bulletin and previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you can sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

In the news today

THE MONTHLY SARL YOUTH NET THIS AFTERNOON

A NEW 8 METRE RECORD ESTABLISHED

and

BOOKING FOR THE PRETORIA ARIA CLOSES WEDNESDAY. BOOK NOW!

Stay tuned for more on these and other interesting news items.

** The monthly Youth Net is scheduled to take place this afternoon from 16:00 Central African Time onwards on 7 070 kHz thus providing the opportunity to our younger generation to be active on the air and for young people interested in the hobby to share in the magic of amateur radio. Join Koos, ZR6KF, as he shares his experiences at the IARU YOTA event he attended in July. He will also discuss plans for the December 2015 youth month and how to participate and enjoy the fun.

Clubs are encouraged to make use of this opportunity to invite young people to their club to operate under the auspices of a licensed club member. To date this monthly activity has not been supported well, especially from clubs where no participation has been observed. We are looking forward to hear our youth on the air this afternoon from 16:00 onwards!

** Andre Botes, ZS2ACP, in Port Elizabeth worked Willem Badenhorst, ZS6WAB, in Polokwane on 40,682 MHz FSK441 via meteor scatter on 6 August 2015. This is a distance of 1 184 km that is a new South African Radio League record as well as a world record. Ian Roberts, ZS6BTE, and Willem, ZS6WAB set up the first-ever record on this band, over a Tropo distance of around 300 km.

Congratulations to Andre and Willem!

** The next Amateur Radio in Action Symposium takes place at the innovation Hub in Pretoria on Saturday 19 September. Full details are on the League home page with links to the programme and booking form. The closing date for bookings is Wednesday evening, 16 September. Do not miss the amateur radio event of the year. The first event was held at the NARC last month and received high acclaim from the participants. You will not be disappointed.

** The KLETSKOUS team is making good progress. SA AMSAT reports that the KLETSKOUS team made some major progress during the past few weeks. Currently the team is researching a new type of battery. It was planned to use Lithium Ion but one of the negatives about Lithium Ion is that it may suffer thermal runaway, which increases the risk of fire. Companies, like NEC, have developed a Lithium-Iron battery using lithium Iron phosphate (LiFePO_4) as the cathode material. Generally, anodes of most batteries are made of carbon. As safety and reliability is the first concern for any battery being used on a satellite, it should not get overheated or catch fire in case of overcharging. The Lithium-Iron battery has superior chemical and thermal stability.

The team is in the process of acquiring Lithium Iron batteries to run tests. If the decision is to switch to Lithium Iron Phosphate, some modifications will have to be made to the charging circuit in the power unit but Fritz Sutherland, ZS6FSJ, says that it is not a major problem and will not delay the construction of the next prototype of the power unit.

Frik Wolff, ZS6FZ, has finalised the layout of the solar panels and Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, will now proceed to mount the solar cells on a test board, which has to be carried out in a vacuum chamber. Work has also commenced on the magnetic stabilisation of Kletskous, which will be achieved by the use of orthogonal rod magnets. ZS6FZ is current working on this and reported good progress with a prototype ready for testing.

Work on the On Board Controller (OBC) is also progressing well. The first two prototypes have been completed. Brain McKenzie, ZS6BNM, is now working closely with team members to establish their telemetry point requirements and interfaces.

Nico van Rensburg, ZS6QL, has been working on the specifications and configuration management and has put a first draft on the table. The team meets via Skype on a fortnightly basis to discuss progress and plan the next steps.

Funding remains a major challenge. Radio Amateurs are urged to support the local CubeSat programme by donating to the SA AMSAT CubeSat building fund. Donors are acknowledged on the SA AMSAT web at www.amasatsa.org.za.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

The Hammies ARC make new friends in the USA. On Saturday evening 5 September at 20:00 CAT, the Hammies gathered around to introduce themselves to other young amateurs in Menominee, Wisconsin USA. The Hammies were using cell phone technology and Echo-link, node W8PIF-R, to achieve this long dis-

tance communication. This occasion had been made possible by Andries Visagie, ZS6VL, who introduced Noel Hammond, ZR6DX, the chairman of the Hammies Amateur Radio Club, to Ed Engleman, KG8CX. Ed is a co-founder, together with James Pearson, KS8O, of a group of young people who call themselves Young Amateurs Communications Ham Team, known by the acronym, YACHT. Their call sign is K8KDZ, and they have been operating since 2007. The YACHT slogan is “Connecting Young Hams, Creating Friendships, Promoting Ham Radio”. The website address is www.yachthams.webstarts.com/about.html.

There was a lot of excitement from both groups as they exchanged names and call signs. It is hoped that these contacts will be made on a regular basis in the future.

** Membership of the South African Radio League currently stands at 1 472 members and 38 affiliated clubs.

** The second leg of the South African Radio League VHF/UHF Analogue and Digital Contest takes place from 10:00 UTC on Saturday 19 September to 10:00 UTC on Sunday 20 September 2015 with FM and SSB phone, CW and digital activity on 6, 4 and 2 metres, 70 and 23 cm and higher.

You can participate as a base station, a field station, a club or multi operator station or a 4 hour limited category station which can further be divided into unlimited both analogue and digital or Limited A analogue only or Limited D digital only.

Contacts must be two-way and stations must give a signal report as well as their six-digit Maidenhead Locator. Self-spotting is allowed. Log sheets must be submitted by midnight on 28 September 2015 by e-mail to contest@sarl.org.za. The full set of rules is available in the 2015 Blue Book, which can be downloaded from the Contest page on the League web site.

** The provisional results of the South African Radio League HF CW Contest held on Sunday 30 August 2015 have been released. The committee received 15 logs and 1 check log.

Roger Jones, ZS6RJ, takes top honours with 332 points followed by Joop Hesp, ZS6JP, on 144 points, Pierre van Deventer, ZS6A, on 136 points and Hans Kappetijn, ZS6KR, on 124 points.

Roger, ZS6RJ, achieved the highest score on a single band with 294 points on 20 metres.

In the Club Competition, the West Rand ARC takes first place with 476 points followed by the Old Goats Amateur Radio Group on 136 points and the Pretoria ARC on 124 points.

Congratulations to Roger and the West Rand ARC. The full set of results is available in HF Happenings 671 and on the Contest page on the League web site.

** Fifty-seven logs were received for the three HF Contests held in August. From the logs it was determined that 2 340 QSOs were made - 1 710 on phone, 141 on digital and 489 on CW. Four of the logs came from DX stations. No multi-operator stations participated.

First place goes to Roger Jones, ZS6RJ, with 498 points with Hans Kappetijn, ZS6KR, in second place with 268 points. Bruce Dunn, ZS5XT, follows them with 181 points, Joop Hesp, ZS6JP, with 144 points and Pam Momberg, ZS6APT, with 140 points.

In the Club Competition, the amateurs from the West Rand ARC put in a big effort and came out tops with 1 011 points. In second place is Pretoria ARC with 536 points followed by Centurion ARC with 307 points and the Highway ARC with 181 points.

Congratulations to Roger and the West Rand ARC. The full set of results is available in HF Happenings 672 and on the Contest page on the League web site.

** In the propagation report, Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. All visible sunspot regions are magnetically simple and non-threatening at this time. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 43.

The 20 to 15 m bands will provide lots of DX fun, especially during the late afternoons and in the evenings. 10 m may also hold a surprise or two. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

And now for the diary of events

Today at 16:00 the monthly Youth Net on 7 070 kHz 16 September closing date for the Pretoria ARiA bookings 19 September - Amateur Radio in Action, Pretoria 19 and 20 September the SARL VHF/UHF Analogue and Digital Contest 26 and 27 September the CQ WW RTTY Contest 28 September closing date for National Field Day logs 1 October the SARL 80 m QSO Party 3 October the SARL Spring QRP Contest

To end this bulletin, a recap of our main news item this morning.

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** Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3 230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR, and read by ..

From the entire news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

73's and thank you for listening

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